

Mr Lee Castleton
14 South Marine Drive
Bridlington
YO15 3DB

GRO

6 December 2004

Dear Mr Knight,

It is with the deepest regret I find myself in the situation I am today. I hope that by writing this letter to you, you may be able to help me by pointing me in the right direction.

I purchased a Post Office/convenience store in Bridlington on the [8th July 2003]. It was at the time a great move for my family and myself. Everything went well until [January 2004] when for no apparent reason we were [unable to ...] on our usually easy weekly balance. I rang the Post Office helpline, explained the situation and was told to [make the money right with my own money] and when an error was found I would be able to have my money back. It was [£1103-00]. We were beside ourselves. Mrs Train who has worked in this Post Office for 17 years and myself spent hours and hours looking for a mistake, but nothing was found.

The Friday of that week we had our normal monthly visit from our [Retail Line Manager]. She was [not interested] and just kept saying it must be an error on our behalf and not to worry an error notice would come back to us to give me my money back. We explained we felt there must be something wrong with the computer system as we had looked through our paperwork repeatedly but could not find anything wrong. This problem on its own is not major I thought I had made the money good and knew an error either computer or human would come back and everything would be back to normal. How foolish I am. The following weekly balance, after numerous calls to various helplines over the course of the week, was £4,000 down. We were beside ourselves. Nobody seemed willing to help. No advice, no guidance. I know nobody could be stealing the money. This who say of repeated phone calls asking for computer checks, paperwork checks or just any help continued for 12 weeks. I now owed the Post Office [£25,000]. Week after week nothing no help nothing. It was impossible for theft to have occurred. We were beyond ourselves. At the end of the [ninth week] I had asked for an [audit] to my Retail Line Manager which was carried out on the [23rd March 2004]. [I was suspended] which at the time was a relief. "I thought at the time at least now someone will help us"! How wrong can one man be in such a short space of time. After an interview with a contracts manager and my Retail Line Manager I was terminated from my contract with the Post Office. I appealed. My appeal was heard by a Post Office employee and the notes were taken by my head of Area P.A. How impartial! I have been repeatedly told that there is nothing wrong with the Post Office computer system. [I know of offices just in ...].

I have been also told that the temp manager that took over from us had no balancing problems yet on the first day of her tenure, the 24 March 2004, [she lost nearly £200-00]. Which has been hidden between herself and my Retail Line Manager. All the paperwork that is required to prove the computer failure has been removed from this office for "investigation" so now having no paperwork to prove my innocence I do not know how to move forward. I received two letters from the Post Office asking for the sum owed. The last was sent on the [9th September 2004]. This letter told me to pay or the Post Office would take action. I am still waiting. I have [lost a £40000-00] income. When I ring to ask if I can have copies of paperwork I am told that the Post Office are still investigating. If that were the case surely after nine months from my termination there cannot be anything left to investigate. Or if there is why was I terminated without an investigation taking place. Please please help me, my financial and mental health are I believe beyond repair.

Yours sincerely

Lee Castleton

Copy to Alen Leighton
Copy to David Mills.